Complaints of Cotton-Growers of Vidarbha Region

†2763. SHRI P.K. MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether cotton growers of Vidarbha Region of Maharasthra are facing difficulties due to non compliance of Cotton Monopoly Law;

(b) if so, the number of such complaints received;

(c) whether flaws in the laws or in their implementations have caused the said difficulties; and

(d) the economic burden on Government due to Cotton Monopoly Laws?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK): (a) to (c) The Government of India has not received any complaint regarding implementation of the Cotton Monopoly Scheme in the Vidarbha region of Maharasthra.

(d) The Government of India has approved the continuation of the Raw Cotton Monopoly Procurement Scheme of the Government of Maharashtra for a further period of five years *i.e.* upto 30.6.2006 subject to the stipulation that in the operation of the scheme there will be no financial liability on the part of the Government of India.

Impact of pulse imports on domestic production

2764. DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have studied the impact of opening up imports, on the domestic pulse production, the cost of which is very high, whereas the imported pulses would be quite cheaper;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the measures initiated by Government to protect the interests of pulse growers in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK): (a) to (c) In order to ensure that the farmers of the country are not put to any hardship in the liberalised trade under WTO

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

agreement on agriculture, the Government has put in place a suitable mechanism for monitoring the imports of agricultural commodities including pulses; and is committed to providing adequate protection to the domestic producers by resorting to the various WTO compatible measures which include appropriate calibration of applied tariffs within the bound levels, imposition of anti-dumping, countervailing duties and safeguard action under certain specified circumstances. As a sequel to these measures, during the year 2001-2002, the import duty on pulses has been raised from 0 percent to 5 percent. The Government has also been implementing the scheme of Minimum Support Prices (MSP) for safeguarding the interest of domestic farmers. Under this Scheme, the Government announces, each season, the MSPs for major agricultural commodities including pulses (Arhar, Moong, Urad, Gram and Masur). Lentil has, recently, been covered under the MSP Scheme. The Prices such fixed, not only cover the cost of production, but also provide for a reasonable profit to the farmers. National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Ltd. (NAFED) which is the designated central nodal agency for the procurement of pulses, intervenes in the market whenever market prices rule below the MSP fixed by the Government.

Cotton production

†2765. SHRI ANANTRAY DEVSHANKER DAVE: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether production of cotton in the new season is likely to be on the same scale as in the season;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the sowing of cotton in major cotton growing States has got delayed; and

(d) if so, the reasons therefor and to what extent the production of cotton in above States is likely to be affected?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHRIPADYESSO NAIK): (a) and (b) The estimates of the production of cotton in the year 2001-2002 have not yet been made. However, according to advance estimates for 2000-2001, the production of cotton is expected to be 93.9 lakh bales of 170 kgs. each during 2000-2001 compared to 116.4 lakh bales during 1999-2000.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.